

THE
DECLARATION
AND
INFORMATION

Of the High and Puissant King of
Bohemia, against the vniust Man-
dates published in the name of
the Emperour:

As also against those that are further
threatned to be decreed and executed,
touching the Crowne of
BOHEMIA.



M. D. C. X X.

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E, *Fredericke*, by the grace
of God, King of Bohemia,
Count Palatine of the
Rheine and Prince Elector,
Duke of Bauaria, Marquis
of Morauia, Duke of Lut-
zelburge and Sileffa, Mar-
quis of vpper and lower Lu-
zattia, &c. To all Christian Potentates, Princes
Electors, Princes, and States in generall, and to e-
uery one of them in particular; as also to all others
of what qualitie, state, or condition so euer they
be; make knowne our willing seruice, friendship,
and gracious will, giuing them hereby to vnder-
stand, that we haue beene certainly and most truly
informed, in what manner not long since, vnder
the name of the Emperours Maiestie, diuers ri-
gorous, & vnaccustomed Mandates and Patents,
(to our most great preiudice, defamation, and

disshonour) haue beene here and there dispersed,
as well within as without the Empire, and in some
places publikely set vp: Thereby vnder pretence
of all manner of vntrue narrations and friuolous
suggestions, pretending, that our true and law-
full Election vnto the Kingdome of Bohemia,
made and performed by the generall vnanimous
consent and agreement of the States of the said
Kingdome of Bohemia, together with the Coun-
tries thereunto incorporated, is vtterly void, and
de facto, of no force, or of none effect. And withall
affirming, that all the Princes, States, and Mem-
bers of the Empire, (which hitherto out of a Chri-
stian compassion, haue in any manner and by any
meanes ayded and assisted the oppressed Christi-
ans of the Kingdome of Bohemia and the incor-
porated Countries thereunto annexed, in humane-
ly persecuted and molested by extreame Tyran-
nies, Murthers, Robberies, Burnings, and inno-
cent blood-shedding) are by the said Declarati-
ons, and Letters Pattents, vpon the auoiding of
the actuall declaration and execution of the pains
and penalties in that case set down and appointed
by the Imperiall constitutions, commanded and
strictly enioyned to leaue ayding and assisting of
the said greatly persecuted and oppressed Christi-
ans, and specially Vs, their now orderly elected
and lawfully crowned King. And further, by
most friuolous vntrue and slanderous imputations
against vs, and with like seuerer menacings, by Em-
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periall power, within a certaine time therein limited and set downe; commanding Vs, expressely, without any delay, certainly, infallibly and actually to abandon, leave, and giue over our said Kingdome of Bohemia, and the Countries incorporated thereunto, obtained by so iust and lawful a Title, and being in vdeniable iust possession.

Now setting apart that, which to the slander and disgrace of the States of Bohemia, hath at large (though vntruly) beene published concerning the displacing and remoouing of certaine vnfit, peruerse and turbulent Officers, alteration of Gouernment, and establishing of Orders for the naturall defence and protection of their Subiects, whereunto by nature they are bound:

As also that, which for the confirmation of the pretended imaginary claime of Inheritance made by the house of Austria to the said kingdome, may be, and is produced and obiected, out of the slender, insufficient and partiall Declaration made by the Emperour *Charles* the Fourth, concerning the free Election belonging to the Bohemians; as also from that vnformal and disorderly priuate testification made by King *Vladislaus*; and of that out of the Decree; seuen and fortie yeares since, by fire and sword compulsiuely extorted and wrung from the assembly of the States in Parliament at Prague; together with the ill alleaged obseruation of their pretended eight hundred yeares succession. Sith that all these things haue beene sully answered:

swered and confuted by the Apologies and deduc-
tarie Declarations made and published by the
said States, with such truth and good ground, as
that we thinke it needlesse here to rehearse or de-
duce the same againe at large.

Only for the better and plainer iustification of
our owne Person, we say that we doubt not, but
that all men of indiffrent and vnpassionate minds,
(that haue seene and read our Declaration dated
the twentieth of October (and seuenth of No-
uember) published in Prague, and the Bohemian
deduction therein mentioned and set downe,) suf-
ficiently perceiue & vnderstand, vpon what most
vrgent and ineuitable reasons and motiues, after
so great and notorious necessities, calamities, and
miseries endured, and thereby inforced defence;
the said States of the renowned Kingdome of
Bohemia; together with the Prouinces incorpo-
rated to the same, haue beene forced and compell-
ed vnto that wel-ordered abdication and reiecti-
on, to them permitted both by the Lawes of God
and man, and by vertue of their lawfull priuile-
ges hitherto inuiolably maintained. And by what
occasion wee for our parts haue beene moued,
and incited to accept of the said vacant Crowne,
(vnexpected by vs, and without any thought of
Ours) and lawfully cast vpon vs by a ioynt, free,
and generall assemblie of the States of the King-
dome of Bohemia, according to the ancient Pri-
uileges and Freedome of Election reserued vnto
them

them by their fundamentall Lawes. As also that in the acceptation thereof wee neuer had any respect to the further advancement or increasing of our owne dignitie, and present particular profit, but chiefly and before all things to the glorie of God, the common wel-fare of our native Countrey, and as much as possibly might bee, to the preservation of this famous Kingdome, and Electorate Principalitie there, by hostile power and force almost vtterly spoyled and ruinated; withall hauing commiseration and taking pitie vpon the miseries, sighes, and lamentable teares which wee had before our eyes of so many poore distressed Christians. And therefore with our pure consciences we doe now againe testifie, that if by the refusall of this Crowne then offered vnto vs, wee might haue beene a meanes that the deuouring fire of dissention raised in the said Kingdome and the Territories thereof, (and still more and more increasing) might haue beene quenched, the persecution for Religion ceased, their infringed Priuileges restored, the Countrey freed and secured from menaced bondage and suppression, and the Empire also, and specially wee our selues, and other States bordering about vs, freed from apparant dangers: Wee would not only haue refused the acceptation of the said Crowne offered vnto vs, but most willingly haue employed our vttermost endeouour in that behalfe.

And wee hope, that no man to whom our acti-

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ons and proceedings, from and before the beginning of these troubles raised in Bohemia, are knowne and made manifest, can as well any waies doubt of our sinceritie, seeing it is vndeniable, that we not onely particularly, but ioyntly also with other godly and true hearted Princes Electors, and Princes, presently vpon their verie first burlling out, as vpon the encreasing of this hurtfull fire, for the preuention of ensuing mischiefes, haue not spared nor refused to vse any good meanes, nor to giue any true and vpright counsell therein. To the which end, at the last election day holden in Frankefort, by our fully authoris'd deputies, (together with the aduice and counsell of our fellow temporall Princes Electors) we did most faithfully and diligently labour, and gaue our aduice, to procure, that before wee handled or dealt in any other matter, the hostile troubles raised in the Empire, and specially in the Kingdome of Bohemia, might first be brought and reduced to a peaceable and quiet State; for the effecting wherof, we wished & desired nothing more, then that the Ambassadors of the States of Bohemia, then sent to Frankefort, (which by our deputies was oftentimes moued) at their instant request might haue beene admitted and heard, and not (as they were) so contemptuously reiect'd and put off.

And the electorall Records of the last proceedings in the said Election at Franckfort, can witness,

ness, That our fully authorised deputies were as vnwilling vnto the said contumelious refusall of the Bohemian Ambassadors, as we were readie to the approuing and admissiō of his Imperiall Maiestie (as King of Bohemia) into the electorall Colledge; but rather oftentimes haue protested and declared, that wee by no meanes would derogate any thing from the liberties and rights of the States of the Crowne of Bohemia, nor thereby in any manner seeke to preiudice either the one or the other.

Therefore, because such good and faithfull admonitions, aduice, and protestations could take no effect, but to the contrarie, the said Ambassadors of the States of Bohemia (against their ancient nationall Lawes and Priuiledges) were constrained with great disgrace to goe home againe vnheard; their propositions set downe in writing, not propounded nor read in the Electorall Colledge, nor yet the cause orderly and lawfully discussed and handled, (the Countrie in the meane time being so grievously afflicted, by continuall and most extreame hostilitie and deuastation) as the like hath not beene heard of:

So that the interposition then made and propounded to the electorall Colledge (which notwithstanding required much time, and in the meane while the Kingdome of Bohemia might haue beene vtterly spoyled and ouerthrowne) could not be brought to any effectuall treatie, nei-

ther was by the contrary part earnestly, nor with befitting zeale esteemed of, nor considered vpon, as conueniently it ought to haue beene; but much rather, purposely the businesse was delayed, that so in the meane time the Countrie might bee weakned and tyred out.

For these considerations, the States at that time assembled together in the Citie of Prague, beeing then in danger of falling into most great extremitie and distresse, as also despayring of any equall and impartiall redresse of that the contumelious reiection and refusall of their said Ambassadors; were constrained and forcibly compelled, to undertake some other meanes (by vertue of their ancient and legall priuiledges) and to proceede to the lawfull alteration of the Crowne, as it is now knowne vnto the World: thereby to preserve and saue themselves from vtter ruine and final destruction, as by their publique Apologies and Deductions set forth, and imprinted, doth sufficiently and at large appeare.

From whence all men, yea also euerie simple man, may easily know and perceiue, That the causes and motiues, whereby the States of Bohemia, and the Prouinces thereinto incorporated, were enforced to this finall resolution, are not in any manner to be ascribed vnto vs, whose care and indenuour still was imployed by all the meanes that could be, to procure that peace, quietnesse, and concord, might be againe reduced, and re-established

blished within the holy Empire; as also, that in the said Kingdome of Bohemia (as a speciall and principall Electorall Principalitie) the troubles raised and begun, might be appeased, and the same reduced to a peaceable and quiet State: But much rather vnto those, who at the verie beginning, (preferring force of armes before friendly means) at the aforesaid Electorall day, neglected, and reiected all good counsell, admonition, and protestations; seeking all the meanes and waies they could, to aduance and effect that their so long before premeditated intent and secret meaning.

And the procelles of these affaires manifestly shew, how little the contrarie part is and hath bin inclined to any peaceable course of proceeding, as their actions sufficiently testifie; and especially hereby, in that we (at the beginning of our Regall gouernement) when occasion was motioned of entering into a peaceable treatie, willingly offered to yeeld thereunto. The same was notwithstanding by them vtterly refused and reiected.

And whereas it is imputed vnto vs, as if wee by our accepting and taking of the Crowne offered vnto vs, both orderly, and without all intrusion, and (according to the ancient Lawes and fundamentall Ordinances of the Kingdome of Bohemia, and their olde customes) by lawfull precedent abdication altogether free and vacant) should thereby rebelliously & by force of armes, haue, of our owne actuall manner, vndertaken to

pull away the said Kingdome and Prouinces incorporated vnto the same, from his Imperiall Maie-
stie, contrarie to the common peace of the Em-
pire : therein we finde our selfe to be altogether
ouer much wronged, and may in regard thereof,
vndergoe and stand vnto the censure of all indiffe-
rent persons, both within and without the Em-
pire. For seeing that by the fore-mentioned seue-
rall published deductorie Writings of the wor-
thie Bohemian States, not onely their right and
lawfull causes of vndertaken Reiection, but also
their anciently descended, & well grounded law-
full Right of free Election : and that no man with
equitie, nor vpon any good ground or solid rea-
son, and iust foundation, can boast of any lawfull
succession to the said Realme; much lesse by dan-
gerous conuentions, cessations, and transports
(wholly opposite to the Fundamentall Lawes)
made against and without the knowledge and con-
sent of the said States, transport the often foresaid
Kingdome of Bohemia, and proprietie of the Em-
pire, and other the noble Countries, vnto any out-
landish strangers :

That all men may sufficiently perceiue what
great wrong and iniustice is offered thereby vnto
vs, by proceeding against vs in such manner, who
neuer sought nor desired to wrong any one, nor
take away against right from any man (of how
meane estate soeuer he were) any thing that be-
longed vnto him.

And

And although the Emperours Maiestie within a short time after our Coronation, in an edict published before this latter *Mandate*, by diuers colourable circumstances and allegations, hath taken vpon him, not onely to contradict, but altogether to annihilate and make void the aforesaid Reiection, Election, and Coronation made, & conferred vpon vs by the said States of the Crowne of Bohemia: Wee doubt not, but that euery man may easily iudge, and discerne that his Maiestie, (who in this cause touching the saide States of Bohemiaes Abdication or Reiection, and therupon ensuing Election and Coronation, presumeth vpon certaine suppositions, and pretences of the house of Austria, being but a partie plaintife) is not for himselfe to iudge, whether the States of Bohemia haue herein done lawfully, and according to their ancient Lawes and priuiledges; and so whether the new Election be in force, and of sufficiencie, or not: nor can he be warranted by any Law, or vnder any colour of absolute Imperial authority, power, and Soueraigntie, to aduance and presse thorow the priuate designs and particular Austrian pretences, with peremptory proccesse of execution, & by his own power to make himself iudge in his own cause, contrarie to all the Laws & Ordinances of the Empire; no more then the deceased Emperours *Frederick, Charles, Rodulph*, and others, in their owne particular controuerfies, and pretences against any of the States of the Empire, did

did ever vndertake and assume vnto themselves,
to be both Iudges and parties.

Note this
well.

Besides this; The States of the Crowne of Bohemia, and the prouinces incorporated to the same, acknowledge not any iurisdiction or Superioritie in the Emperour, in or ouer the Kingdome, (excepting that which concerneth the Feudarie Lands had from the holy Empire) because they are not subiect to the Romaine Emperour, nor to any of the holy Empires censurers, either at the Imperiall Court, nor in the Chamber at Spires; nor also to any other constitutions of the Empire, nor Assemblings and common decidinges, decrees, Tracts, and decisions of the Empire, but haue their owne ancient Countrie Lawes, Priuiledges, Ordinances, Exemptions, and Customes, whereby they are governed.

Whereby it easily appeareth, how vnseasonably and without reason, the Emperours priuie Councell in this private businesse arrogate against vs vnto themselves the office of Iudges, whereunto in regard of their Persons or Qualities they are not called; nor by the temporall Princes Electors, and other Princes, are acknowledged or deemed to be such as are worthie, of their owne authoritie to assume such Princes power, as by such vnfit and disordered proces, of no force nor validitie, to proceede against a King, and a Prince Elector.

But if his Imperiall Maiestie, as Archduke of Austria, be resolved orderly and by due course of
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Law to prosecute and produce his pretended hereditarie claime to the Crowne of Bohemia, then he ought not to doe it before his owne priue Councel and seruants, but (according to the Lawes and Priuiledges of the Crowne of Bohemia) before their owne Iudges, vnto whom such high and weightie causes doe appertaine, and must as plaintife and actor *Forum rei*, sue and follow the same, before them, and according to the Ordinances of the generall Common Law: as on the other side, if as Emperour of Rome, hee be sued by order of Law, by any other, according to the golden Bull of *Charles the Fourth*, hee ought to appeare, plead, and answer before a Palsgrauc & Prince Elector, and therefore neither can nor ought to be his owne Iudge. As now it is to be hoped, that no impartiall person whatsoeuer may any waies doubt of the insufficiencie and manifest nullitie of the aforesaide pretended Imperiall Edict of cassation: So likewise, we are fully perswaded, that from the same or the like grounds, no man will nor can, but hold and esteeme the alreadie thereupon ensued Imperiall rigorous mandates; as also all such others which are threatned, as may hereafter follow, and be made against vs, or others, either belonging vnto vs, or aiding of vs; to bee void and of none effect (as in verie truth of themselves they are) and which we (as occasion serueth, and our necessitie requireth) are determined in all euents as is lawfully permitted vnto vs, to withstand & repugne; in as much as the said proceedings deriued from a passionate minde, and concerning his owne private pretended right, are done without any lawfull examination

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verie obseruable.

nation or knowledge of the cause, and then specially when his Maiestie hath alreadie hitherto chosen another course by force of armes, and therein hath not omitted any kind of hostilitie whatsoeuer; & whereby he hath directly not onely proceeded contrarie to the common Lawes of all Nations, but also against the good and profitable Constitutions of the Empire, and the Sacred corporall Oath ratified by Imperiall Capitulation, whereunto his Maiestie also hath bound and obliged himselfe, in these words following:

That neither he, nor any other for him, or in his name or behalfe, will or shall, by violence or force, molest or trouble any of the Princes Electors, Princes, Prelates, Earles, Barons, nor other States of the Empire, in any manner: But that, if his Imperiall Maiestie himselfe, or any other particular person, hath right or cause to demand or sue for any thing of them all in generall, or of any of them in particular (for the auoyding and preuenting of all dissensions, troubles, and other inconueniences in the Empire, thereby to preserve and maintaine peace and vnitie) he will and shall proceede by lawfull order and processe; and in such cases, where hee or they may haue iustice by Law, be willing to submit themselves thereunto: and will by no meanes, nor vnder any pretence whatsoeuer, permit nor suffer them to be molested, hurt, or invaded by warre, burning, defiances, or any other manner of hostilitie whatsoeuer. That his Maiestie also shall foresee, and hereafter by no meanes suffer nor permit, that any of the States, of high or low degree, Princes Electors, Princes, or any others, shall with-

without iust cause and lawfull audience, wrongfully be proclaimed or declared guiltie of proscription and banishment: But that all cases shall bee proceeded in according to the ordinarie proceſſe, and the holy Roman Empires Lawes eſtabliſhed, to the direction of the Lawes of the holy Empire, and the reformed order held in the Imperiall Chamber, and agreeably be fully and ſtrictly obſerued and followed.

And then laſtly, that his Maieſtie (contrary to the golden Bull, and other Lawes and Ordinances of the holy Empire) ſhall not in any manner, nor by any meanes, of his owne authoritie, ſend out any Reſcript, Mandate, or other preiudiciall Commiſſion, nor by way of entreatie procure the ſame from any other magiſtrate whatſoeuer: with this expreſſe claufe, That if any thing repugnant to the aforeſaid Articles and ſpeciall points, be either obtained, or ſent forth, that the ſame ſhall be in all reſpects wholly fruſtrate, void, and of no force at all.

As therefore in this preſent difference, wherein We now are at controuerſie with the Emperours Maieſtie, concerning the private particular pretence which hee maketh (as Archduke of Austria) vnto our lawfully poſſeſſed Kingdome of Bohemia, and the Provinces incorporated thereunto, We are not as yet at all ſummoned by ordinarie courſe of Law, to appeare, which We are readie and willing to doe and perſorme, ſo it be in an indifferent and conuenient place, and before vnpartiall Iudges (according to the priuiledges of Bohemia:) So no man can nor ought to think hardly of Vs, for reſuſing to obey the Imperiall Monitoric

Mandate, published and sent forth against Vs, bearing date the 30. of Aprill last past; as being wholly opposite and contrarie to all the Lawes and Ordinances of the Empire, and which also is by vertue of the aforesaid Imperiall Capitulation, and the golden Bull, of it selfe frustrate, void, and of none effect at all.

And Wee also hope, that other States and fellow-members of the Empire (that haue not as yet openly submitted themselves vnto the Spanish seruitude, or that haue not betaken themselves vnto the seruice of that House,) will not be moued by the said Imperiall Mandate to them directed (which for the reasons aforesaid is of no force) to desist from their most commendable intents and purposes, which hitherto they haue had, for the glorie of God, and the comfort and consolation of so many poore Christians wrongfully oppressed. And the rather, for that we are perswaded no man of vnderstanding that is not led by vntimely immoderate affection, or blinded with private considerations & imaginarie respects, can iudge or censure, that Wee or Our assistants haue in the least respect done any thing contrarie to the Constitutions of the Empire, by means of this our firme resolution, which We haue bin, and are forced to take against the Emperours Maiestie; not as he is Romane Emperour, (for in that respect We neither doe, nor will derogate any thing from him, but rather, according to the Imperiall Lawes, in all things duely honour and respect him) but as Archduke of Austria, in regard of his pretended particular and private pretences. And therefore, that neither by law nor equitie doe the penalties set down
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in the said actuall peremptorie menacing Declaration and Execution, (as grounded vpon the Constitutions of the Empire) belong vnto Vs, and so much the lesse, seeing they pretend, that the hitherunto attempted & the hereafter further threatned processe, is grounded vpon the Empires Constitutions, which yet are not by Vs at all: but much rather by them of the other part, cleane laid aside, and wholly neglected; yea, and in such manner so ouerstridden and transgressed, and with such vnheard of cruell insolencies, by the forraigne barbarous souldiers who are brought in; as that the inforced Defence and Deliuerance permitted by all Lawes Naturall and Nationall, neither can nor ought by any the like surmise and colour of Lawe, or other pretended ground of Reason whatsoeuer, be drawne and taken at all away from the oppressed.

And if yet his Imperiall Maiestie (beyond all expectation) shall still suffer himselfe to be so far transported and carried away, as that (not regarding nor respecting the precious Oath he hath taken) in respect of the claim he pretends (against Vs) to Our Crowne of Bohemia, and the Provinces thereunto incorporated; continually to molest and grieue Vs, our friends, and Allies, with intimated processe of Proscription (*ex autoritate propria*) and of himselfe actually proceede so farre, especially as in hostile manner, to inuade our hereditarie Countries and Territories, and by that meanes (as he hath already done, and yet continueth to doe, both in the Kingdome of Bohemia, and the neighbouring confines thereof) occasion new commotions, distractions, diuisions, and alterations in

other places of the Empire, and thereby (as much as in him lyeth) seeke to subuert & overthrow the publike peace of the said Empire : We must indeed then with patience commit our Cause vnto God the highest Iudge, with assured confidence, that as hitherto Wee haue palpably felt and seene his great and wonderfull prouidence, and mightie out-stretched arme extended towards Vs, so We hope that his diuine Omnipotence will also not hereafter forsake nor abandon Vs, but fatherly affoord vnto Vs such meanes, that, by his powerfull assistance, We may be able to defend Our selfe and Our right, against so vnlawfull wrongs, and vnexpected barbarous attempts. And hereby We doe expressly and in the best manner that Wee may or can, truly protest, both before God and man, that if, by further menacings, and vnlawfull seuerer processes of Execution, a generall fire of wars (which our good G O D graciously auert) shall be kindled in Our native Countrie of Germanie (as is to be feared) that then the calamities and miseries that thereby may ensue, shall not in any wise be laid vpon, nor imputed vnto Vs; but vnto those Counsellors, and Seruants, that haue not onely neglected to put his Imperiall Maiestie in remembrance of the Capitulation whereunto Hee hath sworne (as by duty they were bound) but also for their owne benefit, particular commoditie, and imaginarie greatnesse in the Countrie of Bohemia, and out of a reuengefull desire, haue ministred such meanes as in many particulars are directly against the aforesaid Capitulation, and the common peace and tranquillitie of the whole Countrie.

And

And this We thought expedient (as also our necessitie requireth) to giue notice of vnto euerie one; verily hoping, that no man (who fauoureth reason, truth, and equitie) vpon the sight of this Our most true Information, can or will bee moued to censure badly of Vs, or to distaste Our Actions, in regard of his Maiesties friuolous Mandate (repugnant to Lawe and the Imperiall Capitulation) published and sent forth against Vs, Our friends, Allies, and adherents, in regard of this controuersie that Wee haue with his Maiestie, as Archduke of Austria: nor suffer any taxations towards the performance of the execution of such priuat pretences, to be laid or leuied vpon them; which the House of Austria it selfe, did neuer heretofore respect nor account of, nor yet ever did any thing or contributed in the like cases of Execution, but did euer, and vpon all occasions, wholly exempt and free themselues from the same.

In regard whereof, the Princes Electors, Princes, and States of the Empire, at this time, haue lesse cause to trouble and to burthen themselues therewith on the behalfe of the said House of Austria, against Vs; but on the contrarie, to be readie and willing, if We or Ours, in manner aforesaid, shall be assaulted and inuaded, to aide and assist Vs with their aduice and meanes, and according to the Order of Executions, (which Wee euer, and at all times, haue duely respected and obserued;) and so much the rather, to afford Vs their helpe, for that euery particular Grant, Tract, and State of the Empire, ought, and is reciprocally bound

bound to aide and assist each other, in the like hostile
oppression and inuasion. To the which, hereby Wee
most friendly, louingly, and graciously incite them,
with promise when occasion shall bee offered,
to requite them with
the like.

Giuen at *Prague* the 1. of Iuly, 1620.

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